

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PAST FEW WEEKS

The action of the past few weeks at Sir George Williams University necessitates a serious assessment if we are to learn and benefit from this experience. This pamphlet will attempt to develop an analysis of the actions of the occupying students, the administration's use of these actions, and the implications of the events in the society as a whole.

The events of the past few weeks played into the hands of the administration for various reasons. 1) The uncontested black nationalist leadership who exploited the prejudices of both black and white students alienated a good deal of potential white support. Thus the black demands were seen as isolated from those of other students.

The issue inherent in the five demands was the racist nature of our society which would have taken the problem beyond the confines of the university and questioned the fundamental nature of capitalist society. To ignore this isolated the struggle to a mere question of two occupied areas of the university. It gave the administration and faculty a chance to manoeuvre without implicating themselves as part and parcel of our racist society.

Because of its anti-communist stand, the black nationalist leadership separated racism from capitalism, therefore passing over the working-class demands of the oppressed Canadian black community. The leadership showed their class interest in doing so, for this was in effect a demand for black capitalism. This demand is identical to the anti-working-class demand of Quebec nationalists who want to replace the English managerial class with the French.

2) The new leftists, by equating isolated campus confrontation with the correct methodology to achieve "meaningful social change", have done exactly the same thing as the ruling class has been doing, namely, isolating students from the working class. Because of its relationship to the means of production, the working class is the only class capable of leading and accomplishing revolutionary change. Implicit in the new left ideology is "action" whether or not it is effective in raising political consciousness. Vis a vis S.G.W.U., the new left ideology allowed action to take place without any realistic analysis, again isolating the action from student and working class support and allowing the administration to capitalize on this.

We, members of the Marxist-Leninist caucus, took an opportunist stand by entering into an unprincipled alliance with the black nationalist leadership. Although we recognized that nationalism (because of its own limited nature) in itself could not develop the struggle to an anti-imperialist level, nevertheless we fell for the "complete unity" line. We felt that criticism would split the movement and we would lose, but on the contrary we would have been made stronger. Because a Marxist-Leninist analysis would have been able to take the struggle past the isolationist and adventurist stage and thrown it

into the community. It would have made many of the black students realize and accept a more progressive line and the struggle would have become more powerful rather than being made weaker. We failed in this at first because we were caught up in a wave of emotionalism, not daring to criticize the black leadership for the reason that they were black and oppressed.

After intense internal struggle we realized our mistakes and then tried to offer a clear analysis. This was cut short by the senseless actions of the occupants in the 7th and 9th floors. We therefore would like to make clear our position on the actions that occurred on February 11th. We are against the idea of destruction of the university unrelated to society. This only serves the administration's interest by undercutting the potential support of other students and the working class.

Now that we have attempted to analyze why the action played into the hands of the ruling class, which includes the administration and its lackeys, we will attempt to show the effects of this action and how they have capitalized on it.

In order to understand how the ruling class has used this incident a few terms must be explained. The correct communist position of today is to accept the People's Republic of China as the leading progressive revolutionary force in the world. The ruling class attempts to slander communists by referring to them as Maoist, making it seem as if they are controlled by an evil genius manipulating them as puppets. A communist force is the most dangerous instrument against capitalist society. Therefore the ruling class will attempt at any opportune time to destroy this force. The incident at S.G.W.U. gave them this opportunity. The administration is now trying to black an anti-imperialist movement from developing on campus by screaming "the Maoists have done the damage", trying to alienate the students from the Marxist-Leninists. In parliament and in the press many times we have heard the action at S.G.W.U. linked with the bombings in Montreal as a "Maoist plot". This attempts to alienate not only the students but also the working class from communism. It is a lie to accuse communists of instituting or supporting this type of action if it is not supported by the working class.

"The revolutionary war is a war of the masses; it can be waged only by mobilizing the masses and relying on them."

(Mao Tse-tung, Selected Works, Vol. I, Pg 147)

The action was used by the ruling class to promote anti-communist and racist reaction amongst the workers. It has also set back a potential alliance between workers and students.

The S.L.C. has also pulled us out of U.G.E.Q., thus carrying out the administration's consistent strategy of splitting and isolating progressive forces. In this particular case not only have the English students at S.G.W.U. been separated from their French counterparts but also an English institution has been isolated within the Quebec nation, which is predominantly French.

The actions at Sir George have set back a meaningful worker-student alliance - the only force that can create a university that will serve the people of Quebec.

S.G.W.U. Marxist-Leninist Caucus